

### INTERCITY HIGH-SPEED RAIL COMMISSION COMPLETES FINAL REPORT



The California Intercity High-Speed Rail Commission completed its investigation of the feasibility of high-speed rail (HSR) for California at the end of 1996, when it submitted its Final Summary Report to the Governor and the Legislature.

The Commission determined that HSR is technically, environmentally, and economically feasible once constructed and would be operationally self-sufficient. Furthermore, the Commission determined that HSR would positively impact the State's economy, enhance California's competitiveness in a global market, and receive widespread support from the people of California.

The Commission recommended a statewide HSR network 676 miles long. Serving over 90 percent of the state's population, the system would link Sacramento, the San Francisco Bay Area, the Central Valley, Los Angeles and San Diego. The system would be electrified, double-tracked, completely grade-separated, with operating speeds exceeding 200 mph. The construction of the HSR network would be a public works program on the scale of the State Water Project or the creation of the state's freeway system.

Now that the feasibility of HSR has been determined, California must secure financing to implement the system. The Commission's financial projections showed that farebox and other revenue would not be sufficient to finance the HSR system's

construction costs. A voter-approved public funding source would be needed to provide a stable base for project construction. Although the projected operating surpluses are not large enough to achieve a system financed by private sources, private partners are expected to contribute to the financing structure, and the Commission recommended a design-build or design-build-operate contracting relationship with private sector entities.

Implementing the HSR network in California is the responsibility of the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) created by Senate Bill 1420 (Kopp/Costa) in 1996, and signed by Governor Pete Wilson in September 1996.

### THE CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY BEGINS WORK

The Authority's mandate is to direct the development and implementation of intercity high-speed train service that is fully coordinated with other modes of transportation and public transportation services. The Authority is required to prepare a plan for the construction and operation of a high-speed train network for the state capable of achieving operating speeds of at least 200 mph that is consistent with, and continuing the work of,

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